Initiative to promote culture in Andhra Pradesh

1590. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any initiatives to safeguard and promote culture of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the achievements made in this regard including the amount allocated for the purpose; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The mandate of the Ministry of Culture is to protect, preserve and propagate the arts and cultural traditions of various States of the country including Andhra Pradesh. The activities are carried out through schemes of attached and subordinate offices as well as through autonomous organizations under the Ministry of Culture, along with some schemes directly administered by the Ministry. These include support to performing arts; exhibitions of visual art; preservation of public records/manuscripts/rare books; strengthening of regional and local museums; scholarships to young artistes; fellowships to outstanding artistes, conservation, preservation and environmental development of centrally protected monuments in the State. Recently, Telugu has been categorized as a 'classical language'.

No specific allocation is made to Andhra Pradesh or to any other State. The funds have been sanctioned to individuals/voluntary organizations and/or spent by Government organizations for the activities/events held in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Does not arise.

Grants for performing artists

1591. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of Government to hike grants for performing artists;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of artists likely to be benefited under the proposal;

(c) whether any monitoring committee is likely to be set up by Government to grade the artists and cultural organizations; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) In January, 2008, the Ministry had constituted a Committee to review the grant-in-aid schemes of the Ministry, including those for Scholarship. The Committee has, *inter-alia*, recommended the raising of grants under the Scheme of Financial Assistance to Professional Groups and Individuals for Specified Performing Arts Project. The approval to the modified schemes is awaited. The number of artists likely to be benefited can be known only after the modified scheme is put in operation.

(c) and (d) The matter is under examination.